THE INVENTION CLAIMED IS:

1.   A method for using a computer system for interacting with a processing system to process a microdevice comprising the steps of:

providing processing information related to a microdevice as a task;

assembling the processing information for the task in the computer system;

providing the processing information for the task for off-line connection from the computer system to the processing system;

performing the task by the processing system independent of the computer system using processing information obtained through the off-line connection;

developing return information resulting from the processing system using the processing information; and

returning the return information through the off-line connection to the computer system.

2.   The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

providing a processing system on-line with said computer system;

providing the processing information for the task for on-line connection from the computer system to the processing system; and

performing the task by the processing system dependent on the computer system using processing information obtained through the on-line connection.

3.   The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

providing an operator mode;

using the processing information for the task in the operator mode from the computer to the processing system;

returning the return information in the operator mode through the off-line connection to the computer system; and

storing the return information in the computer system.

4.   The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

providing an administrator mode;

inputting the processing information related to the task in the administrator mode;

editing processing information related to the task in the administrator mode; and

storing processing information related to the microdevice for the processing system as the task in the administrator mode.

5.   The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

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providing processing system setup and shutdown parameters;

providing processing system process-specific parameters;

sending processing system setup parameters to the processing system;

inputting the number of processed microdevices to be output from the processing system;

sending processing system process-specific parameters to the processing system;

controlling the handling of microdevices;

processing microdevices; and

sending processing system shutdown parameters to the processing system.

6. The method as claimed in claim 5 including the steps of:

providing a number of microdevices;

determining the number of microdevices processed;

determining the number of microdevices handled; and

developing statistics from the number of microdevices processed and handled.

7. The method as claimed in claim 5 including the steps of:

serializing the microdevices; and

maintaining a log of the serialized microdevices.

8. The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

combining a plurality of tasks to define a kit; and

performing the processing of a kit through the off-line connection.

9. The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

providing microdevice information;

providing processing system setup parameters;

providing format information related to the off-line connection;

inputting the number of processed microdevices to be output from the processing system;

providing the processing system setup parameters and format to the processing system;

transferring the microdevice information from the computer to the processing system;

transferring the processing system format from the computer to the processing system;

processing the microdevices;

obtaining information from the processing of the microdevices; and

transferring the information from the processing of the microdevices.

10. The method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the step of:

transferring includes the use of a portable memory medium.

11. The method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the step of:

transferring includes the use of a direct communication connection.

12. The method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of

providing an administrator mode; and

protecting provision of the operator mode using a password input in the administrator

mode.

13. A method for using a computer system for interacting with a
programmer/feeder system to process a programmable microdevice comprising the steps of:

providing programming information related to a programmable microdevice as a task;

assembling the programming information for the task in the computer system;

providing the programming information for the task for off-line connection from the

computer system to the programming system;

performing the task by the programmer/feeder system independent of the computer

system using programming information obtained through the off-line

connection;

developing return information resulting from the programmer/feeder system using the

programming information; and

returning the return information through the off-line connection to the computer

system.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing a programming system on-line with said computer system;

providing the programming information for the task for on-line connection from the

computer system to the programming system; and

performing the task by the programming system dependent on the computer system

using programming information obtained through the on-line connection.

15. The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing an operator mode;

using the programming information for the task in the operator mode from the

computer to the processing system;

returning the return information in the operator mode through the off-line connection to the computer system; and

storing the return information in the computer system.

16. The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing an administrator mode;

inputting the programming information related to the task in the administrator mode;

editing programming information related to the task in the administrator mode; and

storing programming information related to the programmable microdevice for the programmer/feeder system as the task in the administrator mode.

17. The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing programmer/feeder system setup and shutdown parameters;

providing programmer/feeder system process-specific parameters;

sending programmer/feeder system setup parameters off-line to the programming system;

inputting the number of processed programmable microdevices to be output from the programmer/feeder system;

sending programmer/feeder system process-specific parameters to the programming system;

controlling the handling of programmable microdevices;

programming programmable microdevices; and

sending the programmer/feeder system shutdown parameters to the programming system.

18. The method as claimed in claim 17 including the steps of:

providing a number of programmable microdevices;

determining the number of programmable microdevices processed;

determining the number of programmable microdevices handled; and

developing statistics from the number of programmable microdevices processed and handled.

19. The method as claimed in claim 17 including the steps of:

serializing the programmable microdevices; and

maintaining a log of the serialized programmable microdevices.

20. The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

combining a plurality of tasks to define a kit; and

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performing the programming of a kit through the off-line connection.

21.   The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing programmable microdevice information;

providing programmer/feeder system setup parameters;

providing format information related to the off-line connection;

inputting the number of processed programmable microdevices to be output from the programmer/feeder system;

providing the programmer/feeder system setup parameters and format to the programmer/feeder system;

transferring the programmable microdevice information from the computer to the processing system;

transferring the programmer/feeder system form from the computer to the programmer/feeder system;

processing the programmable microdevices;

obtaining information from the processing of the programmable microdevices; and

transferring the information from the programming of the programmable microdevices.

22.   The method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the step of:

transferring includes the use of a portable memory medium.

23.   The method as claimed in claim 22 wherein the step of:

transferring includes the use of a local area network connection.

24.   The method as claimed in claim 13 including the steps of:

providing an administrator mode; and

protecting provision of the operator mode using a password input in the administrator mode.

25.   The method as claimed in claim 13 including the step of:

providing information for affecting changes selected from a group consisting of software, firmware, and a combination thereof by using the portable memory medium.